



Wellness Policy

Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
Wellness Policy Committee.....	2
Leadership.....	2
Wellness Policy Committee	
Members.....	2
Wellness Policy Committee	
Responsibilities.....	3
Public	
Involvement.....	3
Assessments.....	3
Updates.....	4
Records.....	4
Nutrition.....	5
Nutrition	
Standards.....	5
Nutrition Education.....	7
Nutrition	
Promotion.....	8

Marketing..... 9
	Physical
Activity..... 10
	Physical
Education..... 10
Other Opportunities for Physical Activity..... 10
	Physical Activity
Promotion..... 10
	Other School-Based
Activities..... 12

Preface

In accordance with 7 CFR 210.31(c), a Local Education Agency that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) must establish a Local School Wellness Policy for all schools under its jurisdiction. As of June 30, 2017, Local Wellness Policies must meet the minimum requirements set forth in the Final Rule: Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Local Wellness Policies are a valuable tool in the promotion of student health and wellness through the NSLP and SBP. Schools play an essential role in preparing students for successful futures, and proper nutrition and physical activity are key to creating constructive learning environments. Local Wellness Policies provide guidance to further support schools efforts to provide students with a successful and healthy future.

Wellness Policy Committee

Wellness Policy Leadership

Michael Mesterharm, Chief Operating Officer

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The Wellness Policy Committee will be chosen annually to allow for new interested parties to participate.

Wellness Policy Committee Members

Ebonie Durham, Executive Director

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Emily Garbarek, Dean of Operations

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Titus Perez, Physical Education Teacher and Athletic Director

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Nicole Woodfork, Parent and Board Member

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Wellness Policy Committee Responsibilities

Public Involvement

The Local Education Agency permits and encourages public involvement in Local Wellness Policy development, implementation, updates, and reviews. Therefore, the LEA shall invite a variety of stakeholders within the general public to participate in Local Wellness Policy processes. The following methods of communication will be utilized to notify the general public of the opportunity to participate in these processes:

- School Website
- Email communications to parents and supporters
- Signage placed on the school grounds

Assessments

Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, assessments of the Local Wellness Policy must occur no less than every three years. Great Lakes Academy shall conduct assessments of the Local Wellness Policy three years years, beginning 2021 and occurring every three years thereafter. These assessments will:

- Ensure the wellness policy is in compliance with USDA, State, and Local rules and regulations
- Compare the LEA's wellness policy to model wellness policies
- Measure the progress made in achieving the goals as outlined in the LEA's wellness policy

Updates

The Wellness Policy Committee must update the Local Wellness Policy as appropriate in order to fit the needs and goals of the Local Education Agency. The LEA shall make the following available to the public:

- The Local Wellness Policy, including any updates to the policy, on a yearly basis
- The triennial assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the wellness policy

Through the following channels:

- School Website
- Email communications to parents and supporters

Records

The Local Education Agency shall maintain record of the Local Wellness Policy. This includes keeping a copy of the current wellness policy on file and maintaining documentation of the following actions:

- The most recent assessment of the policy
- Availability of the wellness policy and assessments to the public
- Reviews and revisions of the policy, including the individuals involved and the efforts made to notify stakeholders of their ability to participate in the process

Nutrition

The Local Education Agency recognizes the important role nutrition plays in academic performance as well as overall quality of life. The National Education Association references numerous articles supporting the effects of nutrition on the classroom, for example, hunger often has a negative impact on students' success, attendance, and behavior.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 18.5 percent of the nation's youth was considered obese in 2015-16. This percentage increased 1.3 percent when compared to the previous year. Conversely, 15.7 percent of American families experienced food hardship in 2017. Through participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Nutrition Programs, the LEA commits to serving nutritious meals to students in order to prevent both overconsumption of nutrient-poor foods and food insecurity to give students the best chance to succeed inside and outside the classroom.

Nutrition Standards

Meals

All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e. Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat.

Great Lakes Academy additionally does not include juice as an option to meet the fruit and vegetable requirements outlined in any of our programs.

Competitive Foods

All competitive foods and beverages sold must comply with the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards (7 CFR 210.31(c)(3)(iii)). Competitive foods and beverages refer to those that are sold to students outside the reimbursable meal on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). This includes, but is not limited to, vending machine and à la carte items.

Other Foods and Beverages

The following policy refers to all foods and beverages provided, but not sold to students. The Local Education Agency will prohibit the use of food as a reward or as part of a celebration. Providing alternatives to food as a reward promotes healthier habits by reducing exposure to less nutritious food items and, therefore, the amount of calorie-dense food items consumed (e.g. cakes, cookies, candy, etc.). This helps children develop improved food preferences and hunger cues to carry them throughout life. Snack will be allowed for certain in class celebrations at the discretion of the teachers, but should be limited. As an

alternative, teachers are encouraged to implement the following methods for rewards and celebrations:

- Additional physical activities including outdoor and indoor play
- Educationally relevant rewards including books
- Experiential rewards such as additional art projects to complete as a class
- School supplies
- Uniform or school branded clothing items

Fundraisers

- A. All fundraisers promoting food and/or beverage items that are held on school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day) must meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Any school-based fundraisers that the school takes on shall also utilize activities unrelated to food to promote healthy habits and well-being. The school will review and consider the following non-food fundraising ideas:

- Activity based fundraisers (walk-a-thon, dance marathon, etc.)
- Educational activity based fundraisers (read-a-thon)
- Clothing sales

Nutrition Education

In accordance with the Illinois Learning Standards, the Local Education Agency shall meet all Illinois requirements and standards for Health Education. The Local Education Agency shall include nutrition education within the health education curriculum and integrate nutrition education into other core subjects, as appropriate. Various grade levels and curriculums shall use nutrition education information, research, and materials from the following resources:

- [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)
- [MyPlate, Team Nutrition](#)
- [FoodMASTER](#)

The Local Education Agency shall incorporate nutrition education into the following curriculums for the following grade levels:

- 100% of GLA students participate in weekly Character and Fitness classes that cover both physical activity and nutrition education

Nutrition Promotion

The District shall implement nutrition promotion techniques through multiple channels, including the cafeteria, classroom, and home.

The District shall make cafeteria menus and nutrition information available through the following platforms:

- School Website
- Email communications to parents and supporters
- Signage placed on the school grounds

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement uses behavioral economics to positively influence food choices made by children. The evidence-based techniques implemented through the Movement have been proven to increase children's consumption of nutritious foods. The District shall participate in the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement by utilizing the Smarter Lunchrooms 60-point Scorecard and other educational and promotional tools. The District shall implement the following Smarter Lunchrooms techniques:

- Focus on Fruit: A variety of mixed whole fruits are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of stainless steel pans).
- Move More White Milk: White milk is organized and represents at least 1/3 of all milk in each designated milk cooler.
- Healthy foods will be placed at the beginning of lunch lines to encourage student uptake
- Food service staff will issue verbal prompts to students to try healthy foods

Marketing

The Local Education Agency will prohibit the marketing and advertising of all foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). The marketing standards described above apply, but are not limited to, oral, written, and graphic statements made for promotional purposes. Items subject to marketing requirements include, but are not limited to, posters, menu boards, vending machines, coolers, trash cans, scoreboards, and other equipment. This policy does not require schools to immediately replace equipment that does not meet this requirement, however, the District shall implement these standards as equipment needs replaced in the future.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is a key component of the health and well-being of all students. Physical activity lowers the risk for certain diseases, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Physical activity also helps improve brain function, allowing students to perform better in school.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adolescents get at least 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week. Nearly 79 percent of school-age children fall short of meeting this requirement. The Local Education Agency recognizes this connection and commits to promoting and providing opportunities for physical activity during and outside the school day.

Physical Education

In accordance with the Illinois Learning Standards, the Local Education Agency shall meet all Illinois requirements and standards for Physical Education. The LEA shall offer Physical Education class as follows:

- Physical Education is offered for 45 minutes weekly to every student at Great Lakes Academy through our Character and Fitness program

Other Opportunities for Physical Activity

The District shall include additional physical activity opportunities, outside of Physical Education class, during the school day through the following:

- Every student has recess daily for twenty minutes which is held outdoors when weather allows or indoors in our gym when weather does not permit outdoor activity
- Teachers also make use of “Brain Breaks” at least once per day during the instructional day to allow students to stretch and move around the classroom

Physical Activity Promotion

The District shall promote physical activity through the participation in the following initiative(s):

- School will research and implement three, week-long schoolwide initiatives throughout the year to focus on increasing daily physical activity and decreasing sedentary behaviors (TV Turn-off Week, etc.)

Other School-Based Activities

Just as it takes a comprehensive curriculum to provide education to support students' futures, the Local Education Agency's wellness approach must also be comprehensive in its intent to provide students with the tools they need to live a healthy lifestyle. In order to further establish positive behaviors related to nutrition, physical activity, and health, the LEA commits to making additional wellness-based activities available to all students beyond the cafeteria and gymnasium.

The Local Education Agency shall offer other school-based activities to support student health and wellness, including coordinated events and clubs. The following events shall be organized and promoted each year:

- Physical activities offered during before and after school enrichment programming (basketball, volleyball, dance, etc.)
- Yearly GLA Field Day during the month of June
- Yearly Health Fair to provide resources to students and parents

The following health, wellness, and/or nutrition clubs shall be offered to students each year:

- Girls on the Run